



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Consumer  
Service

Mountain  
Plains  
Region

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Reply to  
Attn. of: SP 97-04

Subject: Reimbursable School Lunches Under Nutrient Standard Menu Planning  
(NuMenus) - Milk as a Menu Item

To: STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri ED,  
(Child Nutrition Programs) Montana OPI, Nebraska ED, North Dakota,  
South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming

This memorandum provides clarification on how milk and other beverages should be listed on menus under NuMenus for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The question raised is whether fluid milk should be planned and offered as a choice with other beverages such as tea or juice.

Section 210.10(i)(2) of the NSLP regulations specifies that a reimbursable lunch shall be priced as a unit and shall include a minimum of three menu items: an entree, fluid milk as a beverage, and one other menu item (side dish) which may be any food except a condiment or a food of minimal nutritional value.

There is no "Beverage" menu item category under NuMenus - - the menu item is "Milk." This means that if a school wants to offer other beverages as part of the reimbursable meal, they may not be offered as an alternative to milk. That is, a school may offer other beverages in addition to milk, as long as students are aware that the choice is not between milk and other beverages. If other beverages such as tea or juice are offered as choices as part of the school's unit priced meal, they are to be considered as side dishes in the "other" menu item category. In addition, the school's policy should be clearly publicized so students understand their options.

When formulating menus, schools should be reminded that certain beverages may contain calories but few other nutrients and the placement of these items is important to avoid competition with other more nutritious foods which may be included as side dish choices.

In summary, this policy clarifies the placement of milk as a separate menu item under NuMenus. Please contact our office if you have questions regarding this issue.

*Ann C. DeGroat*

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Regional Director  
Child Nutrition Programs